United Nations S/2001/51

Security Council

Distr.: General
17 January 2001
English
Original: French

Letter dated 16 January 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Burundi to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

1. On the instructions of my Government, I have the honour to transmit to you a communiqué from the Government of Burundi concerning the meeting in Libreville between President Buyoya and Jean Bosco Ndayikengurukiye, head of the rebel movement Conseil national pour la défense de la démocratie/Front pour la défense de la démocratie (CNDD/FDD) (see annex I).

2. I am also sending you an aide-mémoire about the recent acts of violence perpetrated by the same FDD terrorist armed groups and by the Forces nationales pour la libération/Parti de la libération du peuple hutu (FNL/PALIPEHUTU) against defenceless civilian populations (see annex II).

3. The Government of Burundi recalls that the peace agreement signed on 28 August 2000 is the main point of reference for the peace process, and that the rebel movements are urged to join it. However, its implementation will require the cessation of hostilities throughout the territory of Burundi. The aim of the Libreville meeting is to bring the rebel groups to the negotiating table to achieve a ceasefire, under the auspices of the mediator, Nelson Mandela.

4. The Government of Burundi calls upon the Security Council to:

- Condemn the rebel groups once again for the violence committed against the civilian population, including the ambushes set on roads against travellers and the attack against the aircraft of the Sabena airline, and reaffirm that these groups must be brought to justice for violations of humanitarian law and attacks on national and international interests;
- Welcome the Libreville meeting, which is an important step in the search for an end to the hostilities in order to implement the peace agreement signed on 28 August 1999;
- Once again urge the rebel groups to join the peace process, stop holding peace hostage, and resist being duped by external forces;
- Urge all the countries bordering Burundi to ensure that their territories are not used by the Burundian rebels against their country of origin;
- Welcome the action of the mediator, Nelson Mandela, and the regional

– Request donors to come forward with the aid promised at the pledging conference held in Paris on 11 and 12 December 2000.

I request you to have this letter and its annexes circulated as a Security Council document.

(*Signed*) Marc **Nteturuye**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex I to the letter dated 16 January 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Burundi to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Press communiqué

In relation to the contact established with the CNDD/FDD armed group, the Government of the Republic of Burundi wishes to inform national and international public opinion of the following:

- In the search for lasting peace and reconciliation that will bring permanent socio-political stability conducive to true economic growth, the Government of Burundi has always come out in favour of a totally inclusive peace process.
- In this context, the armed groups, an important party to the Burundian conflict, must join the peace process. The ceasefire is the essential precondition for the true implementation of the Arusha Agreement, leading to the restoration of peace and democracy.
- After the signing of the Arusha Agreement, which took place without a ceasefire, various active steps were undertaken to induce the armed groups to end the hostilities and negotiate an end to the war. Concurrently, but not in competition, the international mediation of President Nelson Mandela and the Government of Burundi used various channels for this purpose.
- The combination of these efforts led to the meeting organized in Libreville by the President of Gabon between the Government and the CNDD/FDD armed movement which had finally been persuaded to attend through the intervention of the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.
- The Government of Burundi thanks the heads of State, the mediator Nelson Mandela, and all the personalities who, in various capacities, were instrumental in organizing the meeting in Libreville.
- The Government of Burundi welcomes the success of the Libreville meeting in that it led to CNDD/FDD embarking on a course which, it is hoped, will be irreversible, of halting the violence, the biggest priority, and negotiating a permanent ceasefire.
- As reaffirmed in Libreville, the negotiations will fall within the framework of the international mediation of President Nelson Mandela and the Arusha Agreement. The mediator will assess the possible need for additional staff or assistance to ensure rapid success.
- The date and place of the next meeting must be established as soon as possible. At that meeting, the Government of Burundi hopes that the question of ending the violence will be taken up straightaway and resolved so as to stop the terrifying bloodshed and give credibility to the negotiations among a population decimated by war.
- The Government of Burundi hopes that the overtures which are being made to the PALIPEHUTU-FNL armed movement will lead without delay to similar negotiations so that Burundi may fully and finally turn the page on a civil war

Annex II to the letter dated 16 January 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Burundi to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Aide-mémoire

1. On the morning of 4 December 2000, the leader of the FNL-PALIPEHUTU rebels, Cossan Kabura, signed a statement warning foreigners to leave Burundi for their own safety. He referred to a "new military strategy which we are keeping secret, but which you will soon see on the ground".

2. On the evening of the same day, an airbus A 300 aircraft of the Belgian airline Sabena carrying 176 passengers from Brussels came under machine gun fire from the Rukoko nature reserve, right by the Bujumbura international airport. The aircraft was hit by 13 bullets and two foreigners were injured (a Tunisian and a member of the crew). Observers rapidly understood that the attack was designed to sabotage the pledging conference in Paris (11-12 December 2000). As a result, two airlines have suspended their flights to Bujumbura.

3. On 15 December 2000, the former Minister of the Interior Stanislas Mandi, his son and the widow of the former Minister of Agriculture were murdered at Mageyo (Bujumbura rural) after their vehicle was ambushed by rebels on national highway No. 1. Four other vehicles were hit by bullets. Among the assailants were people who spoke Kinyarwanda, which suggests that the Burundian terrorists were supported by the ex-Rwandese Armed Forces or *Interahamwe*.

4. On 22 December 2000, the day after the first condemnation of the rebels by the Security Council for their acts of violence against civilians, the agricultural director in the Makamba province, his accountant and his driver were murdered on the bridge over the Dama river one kilometre from the town of Rumonge, in the Bururi province. Their vehicle had fallen into a rebel ambush on national highway No. 3.

5. On Christmas Day, hundreds of FDD rebels massacred at least 15 villagers during an attack on a school and an administrative office in Butare, in the Rutana province. Twelve others were wounded and the administrative office and school where the peasants had gone to seek refuge were burnt down, a few kilometres from the border with Tanzania.

6. On 28 December 2000, a bus on the Kigali-Bujumbura run fell into an ambush set by terrorist rebels on national highway No. 1. Twenty-one people, mostly Rwandans, were savagely massacred, including women and children whose sexual organs were mutilated and whose eyes were torn out. Among the victims was a woman from the United Kingdom, Charlotte Wilson, who was working for Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) in Rwanda. Two other vehicles were attacked. According to a woman who survived the ambush "the rebels fired at the driver and the bus swerved onto the side of the road; they then ordered the passengers to get out and executed them one by one; Wilson had difficulty in getting out of the bus; I thought that she was wounded like many others, but I then subsequently realized that she was frightened; after the head of the rebel band told me that I could leave and I was slowly walking down the road, I heard the rebels asking the white woman for money. She replied that she had already given the first group all the money she

had. I then heard shots ...". She was killed by a bullet in the chest. About a dozen other people were taken to Muramvya hospital, 20 kilometres further on.

8. During the first week of January 2001, the rebels attacked several places in the Bururi commune, in particular the Munini *colline*, killed three people, burnt down about 20 houses, shops and schools, and two vehicles, and stole dozens of cows.

9. On 8 January 2000, the FNL rebels attacked the Kinama district, on the periphery of the city of Bujumbura, and killed three people, including an old woman. They also burnt down houses.

10. On 14 January 2000, they laid an ambush for the administrator of the Makebuko commune on the Gitega-Rutana road; he was hit by a bullet and is still in hospital, along with his driver. He was going to travel several kilometres further to comfort the population which had just been attacked by the same rebels from the Rutana province.